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Egypt

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Report

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- Food and Trade Laws
- Appendix I
- Appendix III

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Section I: Food and Trade Laws

A. Tariff and non-tariff barriers in Egypt continue to pose challenges to the importation of a number of U.S. agricultural products. In September 2004, the Egyptian government issued a new tariff rate decree to reduce customs on many products; however, tariffs on some products are still elevated. For example, import duties on most consumer-ready product imports are 32 percent. Tariffs on some fruits, such as apples and pears, are 40 percent. The tariff rate on cigarettes, beer, wine, and other alcoholic drinks continues to be very high. In addition, Egypt continues to maintain stringent product standard requirements such as shelf life and labeling requirements and cumbersome customs procedures. These requirements often stifle trade and cause long delays at customs.

B. The government reduced the maximum tariff rate for most imports from a high of 50 percent to 40 percent. In keeping with most of its Uruguay Round commitments, over 98 percent of Egypt's tariffs are bound tariffs. Egypt's average weighted tariff rate was 27.5 percent, which was relatively high when compared to other developing countries with large internal markets and diversified industrial economies. The government removed GATT-inconsistent service fees and import surcharges, reduced the number of ad-valorem tariff rates from 27.5 percent to 6 percent, dismantled tariff inconsistencies, including sharp escalation and reverse progression on tariff rates, and rationalized sub-headings above the six-digit level of the Harmonized System (HS). The new tariff structure includes six tariff rates, pegged to the degree of processing, that range between 2 percent on raw materials and primary feeding products and 40 percent on durable consumer goods. A number of exceptions still exist, including duties on imported alcoholic beverages, tobacco and cigarettes.

In addition to tariffs, the GOE levied service fees on the value of imported shipments in exchange for inspection, listing, classification and reexamination of shipments. An inspection fee of one percent was levied on all imports. The GOE also applied an additional surcharge of two percent on goods subject to import duties of 5 percent to 29 percent and a surcharge of 3 percent on goods subject to duties of 30 percent or more. The government also eliminated services fees and import surcharges ranging from 1 percent to 4 percent, which were considered GATT-inconsistent non-tariff barriers to trade. All goods are now subject to a 10 percent sales tax. The government of Egypt replaced its 10-digit structure with less than six thousand tariff lines. This change should reduce disputes over product classification for customs purposes. In addition, the GOE eliminated export duties on 25 products that were in short supply on the domestic market. (Appendix III illustrates the current tariff rates for important agricultural and food products).

C. The decree has also reduced tariffs on imported poultry to 32 percent from 80 percent. The tariff applies to all categories of poultry: fresh, refrigerated, chilled, or frozen, and whether they are whole slaughtered birds or poultry parts. The tariff on live poultry is 5 percent. Though the tariff rate has been reduced, U.S. exports are not expected to increase due to concerns over halal slaughtering practices. Egyptian officials claim that slaughter must be done by a hand held knife and without stunning the birds before slaughter. However, Egypt does not seem to be applying the same rigorous standard to beef that it seeks to apply to chickens, and it appears that the chicken restriction may be motivated more by protectionism than by religion.

D. In March 2005, the government of Egypt removed its ban on imports of beef and beef products from the United States. This ban had been in place since December 2003, when a single case of BSE was discovered in the United States. The Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture is now issuing import licenses for U.S. beef and beef products that meet certain conditions related to the importation of chilled or frozen deboned beef and beef livers, kidneys, and

hearts from the United States (see details in previous report EG5005). In addition, the GOE eliminated its restriction on the import of frozen beef cuts with a fat content of more than seven percent. The restriction had been in place since 1995 as a health protection measure although this requirement was not applied to local producers.

E. The Government's import restrictions on the importation of live cattle from EU countries because of BSE and FMS concerns remain in place. Since the U.S. is not declared as EBL free, importation of U.S. dairy cattle into Egypt was effectively banned. However, as a result of joint efforts between U.S. industry, importers, FAS Cairo and USDA APHIS, the Egyptian government agreed to consider breeding cattle coming from biosecured farms under the supervision of official veterinary authorities coming from EBL-free herds. In June 2001, Egypt lifted its ban on US dairy cattle imports following extensive negotiations between USDA and the General Organization for Veterinary Services. However, the veterinary authorities imposed a 90-day quarantine requirement on cattle imports from the U.S. because of the EBL concerns.

F. During 2004, no beef or dairy cattle were imported from United States due to high prices and quarantine requirement on cattle imports. Egyptian dairy farmers continue to favor U.S. dairy cattle for their higher milk production (27 Kg/day in their first lactation) compared with 16 Kg/day for other cattle from other sources. However, according to Egyptian importers, the high prices of U.S. dairy cattle which recently was \$2,800 CIF for non registered and about \$3,300 CIF for registered cattle, or more than \$1,000 higher than the landed price for Australian dairy cattle, is a constraint for U.S. exports. In June 2001 Egypt lifted its ban on US dairy cattle imports following extensive negotiations between USDA and the General Organization for Veterinary Services. However, the veterinary authorities imposed a 90-day quarantine requirement on cattle imports from the U.S. because of EBL concerns.

G. On January 28, 2003, the Government of Egypt reversed a long-standing policy of fixed exchange rates and announced that its currency would float. The foreign exchange rate will be determined by the free market allowing commercial banks to determine the rate based on market demand. According to the government, the new mechanism will enhance confidence in the Egyptian economy and make Egyptian exports more competitive.

H. The Ministry of Health (MOH) issued decree 73 of 2001 regarding colors admissible for use on packaging materials. It is mandatory that colors used on internal and external packaging must not be harmful to human health. In addition, external-packaging colors should be fixed (not to be removed).

I. In 2003, after intensive bilateral discussions with the GOE through the U.S.-Egypt Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) and follow-up activities by post with the Egyptian Office for Standards, the government conducted a comprehensive review of its product standards regulations for food products. The objective of this review was to isolate and declare food product standards that are based on non-food safety concerns as "voluntary" standards. The GOE has completed its review and published a list of new standards. FAS/Cairo continues to be in contact with officials to clarify discrepancies regarding the list.

J. The process of inspection and certification of imported goods is centralized under the General Organization for Export/Import Control (GOEIC) located in the Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade. There are representatives from other ministries such as, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health monitoring the inspection process. Release certificate is not issued unless all authorities approve the consignment and hence GOEIC issues a release or approval certificate.

K. Egyptian authorities claim that all product standards and requirements applied to imported food are identical to those applicable to domestically produced products. In fact, Egyptian authorities are stricter in enforcing product standards on imported food products than on locally produced food products. If a local product standard for a specific imported item does not exist, Egyptian authorities may apply the standard for that product used in the country of origin. Importers report that they frequently encounter problems because of ill-defined product standards. All product specifications used in Egypt include the following information:

- Name of product
- Ingredients
- General provisions governing the condition of the product
- Specifications
- Packaging and labeling statements
- Means of testing and analysis
- Production dates
- Authorities setting the standard for the product

After a product standard is approved, the Egyptian Organization for Standardization and Quality Control assigns it an identification number. The number also includes the year in which it is announced (e.g., 1812/1996).

Some modifications to regulations are announced in the "Official Gazette." Others are implemented without official notification. Once a ministerial rule (e.g., decree, law, etc.) is issued, importers are strongly advised to periodically check with the various government clearing authorities to see if it has been amended (for example, by internal memoranda). Laws often change and invariably take effect as soon as they are announced.

Restrictions on Agricultural Imports

The Food Institute of the Ministry of Health is responsible for registering and approving all specialty and dietary foods. Importers are required to submit a form in order to obtain a license for dietary products. The validity period of the license varies from 1 to 5 years depending on the product. After the expiration date of the license, the importer has to submit a new request for license renewal. It takes 4 to 6 months to register a product. The renewal of the license costs about \$500. However, if a similar local dietary product is available in the market, registration for an imported product is not approved.

The Egyptian Organization for Standardization and Quality Control (EOS) in the Ministry of Industry has sole responsibility for establishing, adopting and publishing food standards and codes of practice. While the EOS issues all product standards, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Foreign Trade to apply those standards. Anyone who wants to have a new specification established and included on the list of approved Egyptian specifications must present proof that the desired specification standard already exists and is approved for use in some other "acceptable" country.

In cases where no mandatory Egyptian standard exists, the following standards are acceptable:

- International Standards (ISO/IEC)
- European Standards (EN); in the absence of EN standards, British (BS), German (DIN), and French (NF) standards may be applied
- American Standards (ANS)
- Japanese Standards (JAS)

- Codex Standards

In the absence of an Egyptian or international standard, authorities often refer to the Analysis Certificate accompanying the product. If no suitable standard exists for a product, a committee may be formed to develop a new standard. However, it may take up to two years or more for the new standard to be implemented after it is approved.

Tests and analyses are conducted on all imported food products upon arrival at ports. Analyses are conducted in accordance with the specifications, regulations, and other instructions.

The following tests are mandatory on all imported food products upon arrival:

- Laboratory tests and analyses by the Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Agriculture veterinary inspection of dairy, fish, meat, and poultry products
- Labeling and product compliance with the Egyptian Standards enforced by the General Organization for Export and Import Control (GOEIC) of the Ministry of Foreign Trade.

All tests are conducted in government laboratories. Tests and analyses by private laboratories are not permitted or acceptable.

Tests and analyses are conducted to assure that the product is (1) fit for human consumption, 2) free from contagious diseases, and 3) in compliance with Egyptian product specifications.

Since inspection is now centralized in GOEIC, a committee is formed with representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Health, and GOEIC. Each ministry performs its analysis on the same product sample and issues its results to GOEIC. If one ministry rejects the product, GOEIC, in turn, also rejects the product.

The number of samples withdrawn has been reduced as a result of centralizing the inspection process with GOEIC. Importers are supposed to be notified of all test results within 7 days after samples have been drawn. However, for canned products, mineral water, and frozen products, tests results must be submitted within 14 days after samples have been drawn.

A product may be rejected for the following reasons:

- Not fit for human consumption
- Incorrect labeling
- Prohibited colors, additives, or preservatives
- Incorrect or missing certificates (however, authorities usually allow importers extra time to submit corrected documents)
- Failure to comply with Egyptian product specifications
- Less than 50 percent of the established shelf-life remains for the product

If a product is rejected, it may be:

- re-exported from the port of entry.
- or**
- confiscated at the port of entry.

If the rejection is due to unsatisfactory laboratory tests, the importer has the right to have the product re-tested three times. The appeal for reconsideration should be submitted to GOEIC within seven days.

Section II: Labeling and Packaging Requirements

Egypt requires restrictive labeling for imports of food products. With the exception of the production and expiration dates, information only in English (or other foreign language) is not allowed. Dates are accepted in English, but the word "Production" and "Expiry" MUST also be written in Arabic. Arabic language is mandatory. Labels can be printed on the package or be of a permanent adhesive type. Products cannot show more than one date of manufacture or expiration on the package. For example, goods have been rejected if the inside package has a different date than the outside carton. Information on the label cannot be erased, scratched, or altered in any way. Requirements are more restrictive for meat and poultry products.

All labels must include the following information:

- Name and address of manufacturer
- Brand or trademark, if appropriate
- Country of origin
- Type of product and grade
- Name and address of importer
- Production and expiration dates. Production and expiration dates may be mentioned separately on the top of the package. They can be applied by laser, imposed, or printed. In such cases, there is no need to repeat them on the label.
- Product use instructions (optional)
- Product ingredients
- Storage instructions or temperature
- Net weight
- Gross weight and total number of the packages per case or carton
- If the product contains preservatives, the percentage of each preservative should be indicated
- If the product is meat or poultry, the following statement must appear: "slaughtered according to the Islamic ritual" or "Halal slaughtered"

However, the following items are exempted from the labeling obligation*:

- Small items whose greater surface is 10 cm square or less.
- Milk and beverage packs whose quantity is 200 milliliters or less.
- Wrapped dried sweets (candy, jelly candy, toffee, etc. and fun size chocolates sold by weight (kilogram or lb.) not by bar as these are considered unpacked product.

* Ministerial Decree No. 163 of 1999

In November 1997, the Ministry of Trade issued decree No. 465, which calls for the insertion of labels inside the packaging of imported products, including information on the name and address of each importer in Arabic. This requirement necessitates separate production procedures for products destined for the Egyptian market, which will increase production costs and limit marketing options for U.S. exporters.

Any contradiction between the English and Arabic dates may lead to product rejection.

The Ministry of Health issued decree number 73 of 2001, which mandates that colors used on the inner and outer package should not be harmful to human health and should be fixed. If the color could be easily altered, its use is not permitted.

Labels can be printed on the package or be of a permanent adhesive type. Products cannot show more than one date of manufacture or expiration on the package. Information on the label should not be altered in any way.

The package label must show the production and expiration dates without the use of codes. For example,

Day -- Month -- Year may be used for food products for which the expiration period is 6 months or less.

Month -- Year may be used for food products for which the expiration period exceeds 6 months.

There are no specific size or placement requirements for labels. However, labels with all required information must be placed on every package weighing 50 grams or more.

On November 1997, the Ministry of Trade and Supply issued Decree No. 465 adding new labeling requirements to the importation of meat and poultry products. The decree requires that all products must be packaged in sealed bags.

Labels must be inserted *inside* the package as well as on the outside carton. The information on the label may be in two or more languages, as long as one is Arabic. The label must include the following information:

- Country of origin
- Producer's name and logo (if any)
- Name of slaughterhouse
- Slaughter date
- Name and address of importer
- Name of entity, which issued the "Islamic Slaughter" certification.

N.B. Such entity must be approved by the Commercial Office of the Egyptian Embassy (or Consulate) in the country of origin.

Section III: Shelf-Life

Egyptian shelf-life requirements for food products differ in many respects from the standards used by other countries. "Best-Used-By" dates are not acceptable in Egypt. Any product that exceeds its established shelf-life is not considered fit for human consumption. Product must arrive at the port of entry with at least 50 percent of its established shelf-life remaining; otherwise the consignment will be rejected.

There are several factors that affect the shelf-life of a product including food additives, packaging, storage, etc. Egyptian authorities establish shelf-life standards, which are usually more stringent than those, used in international trade. Ministerial Decree No. 107 of 1994 of the Ministry of Industry contains the validity periods for all food products (see appendix IV for shelf-life and packaging standards).

The shelf-life of a product is calculated from the date of production until the date of completion of all customs procedures and import certification at the Egyptian port of entry.

Exceptions to the above include 1) corn seeds, as long as the seeds being imported were harvested during the same year of importation; and 2) green coffee.

Section IV: Food Additive Regulations

A. Artificial Colors

On October 1997, the Ministry of Health issued Decree No. 411 increasing the number of artificial colors allowed in food products. The following colors are permitted:

- Curcumin
- Riboflavin: lactoflavin
- Riboflavin-5-phosphate
- Tartrazine: FD & C yellow no. 5
- Quinoline yellow
- Sunset yellow FCF: FD&C yellow no. 6
- Carmines: cochineal extract
- Carmoisine (azorubine)
- Ponceau 4 R: cochineal red A, new coccine
- Red 2 G: azogeranine
- Allura Red AC: FD&C, red no. 40
- Indigotine: FD&C, blue no. 2
- Brilliant blue FCF: FD&C, blue no. 1
- Chlorophylls and chlorophyllins:
- Chlorophylls
- Chlorophyllins
- Copper complexes of chlorophylls and Chlorophyllins
- Copper complexes of chlorophylls
- Copper complexes of Chlorophyllins sodium and potassium salts
- Fast green FCF: FD&C, green no. 3
- Plain caramel
- Caustic sulphite caramel
- Ammonia caramel
- Sulphite ammonia caramel
- Brilliant black PN
- Brown HT: chocolate brown HT
- Carotenes
- Mixed carotenes
- Beta carotene
- Annatto extracts (bixin, norbixin)
- Paprika extract, paprika oleoresins
- Lycopene; gamma carotene
- Beta-apo-8-carotenal
- Ethylester-beta-apo-8-Caro
- Lutein: xanthophylls
- Beetroot red (beet red)
- Anthocyanins
- Grape skin extract
- Calcium carbonate
- Titanium dioxide

Acceptable artificial colors are not always allowed in all food products. Exporters should check with the Ministry of Health to verify the acceptability of any food coloring.

There are no exceptions to the regulations governing food colorings. The scientific name of the color ingredient and the percentage of concentration must be indicated on the Analysis Certificate. Egyptian authorities will not allow a product to be imported if it contains an unauthorized color, even if the use of the color is acceptable in another country.

Natural Colors

The following natural colors extracted from fruits and plants are approved:

For fruit juices, concentrate, powders

- Berries, currants (black currents)
- Citrus fruits
- Drupes (cherry, plum, and prunes)
- Melon family
- Rose hips (hipberries)
- Tomato
- Pineapple, mango, kiwi

For vegetables, vegetable juice and powder

- Pulses (pea flower)
- Carrot
- Cabbage
- Beet root
- Spinach
- Netles (Utrica)
- Alfalfa
- Yellow and red turnip
- Sweet potato
- Capsicum varieties (cayenne pepper)

For cereals, fermented and roasted

- Maize
- Purple corn
- Rye
- Barley

For spices, herbs, and flavorings

- Saffron
- Sandelwood (red)
- Carthamus red, yellow (safflower)
- Paprika
- Sage
- Parsely
- Shallots
- Violets
- Burdock

Others

- Malt
- Molasses
- Yeast
- Cocoa
- Coffee

- Egg yolk
- Carob flour
- Liquorice
- Honey
- Burnt Sugar
- Hibiscus
- Tea
- Mate
- Crustacea
- Nuts
- Mushrooms

B. Preservatives

All preservatives must be identified along with the allowed concentration expressed as a percentage in parts per million calculated on the acid base. Ministerial Decree No. 478 of 1995 issued by the Ministry of Health lists all acceptable preservatives and concentrations levels.

C. Flavorings

The Ministry of Health does not maintain a list of approved flavorings. However, all flavorings accepted under CODEX or WHO also are approved for use in Egypt.

Section V: Pesticide Residues and Other Contaminate Regulations

Regulations governing pesticides, pesticide registration and use are the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Division of Pesticide Residues and Environmental Pollution (DREP), an office of the Central Agricultural Pesticides Laboratory (CAPL), is charged with analyzing pesticides and chemical contaminants in foods. CAPL is a laboratory within the Agricultural Research Center (ARC). The Center also makes recommendations to the Ministry of Agriculture on matters pertaining to pesticide legislation and regulations.

Registration Procedures for Pesticides in Egypt

All pesticides must be registered before they can be used. The registration process includes the following:

- An application submitted to the Pesticides Committee (PC) of the Ministry of Agriculture showing the following information:
- Registration certificate valid for the country of origin.
- Toxicological data prepared by the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR).
- Copies of all environmental impact studies.
- Field and laboratory evaluation results and recommendations.
- Label.

Upon review, the PC refers the application to the Recommendation Committee, which sets the recommended usage rates.

The Recommendation Committee then forwards the application to the Research Station for field evaluations and monitoring.

The Pesticides Committee includes representatives from:

- The Ministry of Health
- The Central Laboratory for Pesticides
- The Environmental Affairs Agency

Egyptian standards for pesticide residues in food are derived from FAO and WHO standards. It is a criminal offense to sell food or bottled drinking water containing pesticides, heavy metals or mycotoxin in excess of the Maximum Residues Limits (MRL) set by these organizations for those products.

Each year, the Division of Pesticide Residues and Environmental Pollution analyzes several hundred-food items for organ chlorine, organophosphorus, dithiocarbamate and other pesticides.

Section VI: Other Regulations and Requirements

Food Certificates

A number of certificates are required for all imported food products:

- Certificate of Origin
- Health Certificate
- Veterinary Certificate (for meat, poultry, fish and dairy products)
- Islamic Halal Certificate, "if applicable"
- Temperature Certificate (for frozen, deep frozen and chilled products)
- Analysis Certificate, "if applicable"

All the above certificates should be countersigned by the Chamber of Commerce and notarized by the Egyptian Embassy or Consulate in the country of origin, or any other Arab Consulate if there is no Egyptian Embassy or Consulate in the country of origin.

Importers must present ONE set of all import documents to the General Organization for Export and Import Control.

The certification requirements for imported food products differ according to the product. For example, special veterinary certificates are required for meat, poultry, fish and dairy products. If the product is further processed in another country during transit, the appropriate certification may be executed in the country where additional processing is done.

FAS/ICD is currently implementing a project funded by USAID to upgrade port laboratory inspection facility in Dhakheila (near Alexandria), which belongs to the General Import & Export Control Authority (GOEIC), Ministry of Trade. The objective of the project is to help streamline and improve GOEIC's meat and poultry inspection system.

On July 10, 1997, the Ministry of Agriculture issued a Ministerial Decree No. 1647 stipulating the following (additional) conditions related to the importation of meat and live animals:

An importer must submit a request to the General Administration for Veterinary Services indicating: a) the number of animals or type of and meat being imported; b) country of origin; c) shipping port; d) expected date of shipment arrival; and e) means of transportation.

The General Administration for Veterinary Services examines the request according to the epidemiological status of the country of origin. If the epidemiological status permits importation, the importer is issued a permit. The permit is valid for one month. The

importer can renew the approval if importation does not occur within one month. No fees are charged for the approval permit.

Also, in November 1997, the Ministry of Trade and Supply issued Decree No. 465 adding new requirements to the importation of poultry and meat products.

Special Requirement for Poultry and Meat Products:

- Products must be shipped directly from the country of origin to Egypt.
- Products must be packaged in appropriate bags as required by the Egyptian standards. Labels must be inserted *inside* the package as well as on the outside carton (see Labeling Section).

Release by the veterinary authorities depends heavily on the veterinary pre-approval license. If there is any discrepancy between the pre-approval license and the shipping documents, the product will be rejected. Importers should be completely familiar with all of the information required for the pre-approval license and instruct their suppliers accordingly. Importers should check with the Veterinary Authority of the Ministry of Agriculture for more information and instructions.

A number of other certificates are also required for animal products:

- Islamic Halal Certificate
- A Certificate of Origin showing the name of the exporting country, number of parcels, type of meat, date of inspection, production and expiration dates, name of exporter, port of entry, and name of consignee.
- A Veterinary Certificate issued in the country of origin indicating that the animals used in making the product were examined before and after slaughter, and that they are free from contagious diseases.
- In the case of frozen meat, a certificate assuring that a temperature of -18 degrees Centigrade was maintained before export, and that each piece was wrapped in accordance with accepted international packaging standards.

Batch Number Certificates

Batch Number Certificates (BNC) are required for all food products in order to facilitate product sample withdrawal. Each batch will be considered as a different item for sample withdrawal purposes.

Samples will be drawn from each batch having different production and expiration dates. Products with different dates are considered to be different items and should be identified as such on the Release Certificate and Batch Number Certificate.

Product Sampling

All product samples should be representative of the consignment and should be drawn during the unloading process. A committee is formed to withdraw random samples (i.e., the Physical

Examination Committee, see Section 3.4). One representative sample (specified in size) is drawn from each consignment and respective inspection agencies have that sample for testing. However, each agency conducts its own laboratory tests. Tests may be conducted by 3 different laboratories.

Cleanliness must be assured when samples are taken to avoid contamination. Also, the committee is supposed to take the necessary steps to assure the soundness of the product samples while they are being transported to the laboratory for analysis. All sample information is indicated on the Form of Examination Results.

According to Decree No. 232 of 1996 issued by the Ministry of Health, the following provisions are to be taken into consideration when samples are withdrawn:

- the consignment should be treated as a single shipment;
- the samples should be divided according to batch sizes and type of product;
- the samples should be distributed among the laboratories so as to avoid repetition;
- all label information should be presented on the "Sample Analysis Form."

If a consignment is imported from various origins or product sources, each should have a distinctive and confidential number.

Section VII: Other Standards

The following is a partial list of ministerial decrees and laws, which affect the importation of food products:

PRESIDENTIAL DECREES

- Presidential decree No. 300 of 2004 reducing maximum tariff rates.
- Presidential Decree No. 106 of 2000 centralizing the process of inspection and certification of imported products under GOEIC.
- Presidential Decree No. 250 of 1999 banning some products from the EU.
- Presidential Decree No. 243 of 1998 reducing maximum tariff rates.
- Presidential Decree No. 619 of 1998 for importation of durable and non-durable goods.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

- Law 82 of 2002 for Plant Variety Protection
- Ministerial Decree No. 3007 of 2001 for Plant Quarantine
- Ministerial Decree No. 1073 of 1998 for Leucosis
- Ministerial Decree No. 9 of 1997 for meat importation.
- Ministerial Decree No. 1647 of 1997 for issues related to the importation of meat and live animals.
- Ministerial Decree No. 874 of 1996 forbidding testing, importation, usage of pesticides classified as "B" and "C."
- Ministerial Decree No. 25 of 1982 for product sampling.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE

- Ministerial Decree No. 524 of 2000 for Inspection and Samples Withdrawal.
- Ministerial Decree No. 552 of 2000 for inspection certificates.
- Ministerial Decree No. 423 of 1999 amending Ministerial Decree No. 619 of 1998.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

- Ministerial Decree No. 73 of 2001 for packaging materials.
- Ministerial Decree No. 118 of 2000 for canceling radiation inspection except for Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.
- Ministerial Decree No. 411 of 1997 for food colorings.

- Ministerial Decree No. 53 of 1996 for product sampling and test analysis.
- Ministerial Decree No. 354 of 1996 for product rejection.
- Ministerial Decree Nos. 232 of 1996 and 349 for product sampling.
- Ministerial Decree No. 478 of 1995 for food preservatives.
- Ministerial Decree Nos. 302 of 1986 and 782 of 1984 for product sampling.

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY

- Ministerial Decree No. 163 of 1999 for labeling canned, frozen and packed food products.
- Ministerial Decree Nos. 179, 180, and 181 of 1996 issued by the Ministry of Industry listing Egyptian product specifications and mandatory standards.
- Ministerial Decree No. 107 of 1994 and Egyptian Standard No. 2613 for shelf-life standards.
- Egyptian Standard No. 1546 of 1984 for labeling requirements.

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY

- Ministerial Decree No. 286 canceling Decree No. 250 for prohibiting importation from EU countries.
- Ministerial Decree No. 619 of 1998 mandating that all consumer goods be shipped directly from the country of origin.
- Ministerial Decree No. 553 of 1998 permitting to store products of the customs area provided that the shipment is in accordance to all labeling conditions.
- Ministerial Decree No. 465 of 1997 for import requirements of slaughtered birds, poultry and meat.
- Ministerial Decree No. 227 of 1997 lifting the ban on whole poultry.
- Ministerial Decree No. 55 of 1996 for pesticide residues.
- Ministerial Decree No. 178 of 1996 for the importation of meat and dairy products.
- Ministerial Decree No. 57 of 1939 for product and brand registration.

Section VIII: Trademark / Copyright Law

Ministry of Supply and Home Trade is responsible in the registration of brand names and logo.

Ministry of Supply and Domestic Trade
General Administration for Trademarks
Address: Bldg. 109 El Fostat El Gedida
Old Cairo behind Amr Mosque
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: (202) 918-6018 (D.) / 918-6017
Fax: (202) 918-9999 / 918-6014
Contact: Mr. Mostafa Abdel-Ghaffar
Chairman
Mr. Mohamed Abdel Aal
Manager for Trademarks

A number of certificates and documents including the following items must be submitted during the registration process:

- A sample of the logo and brand name
- A certification of the company's incorporation in the home country

- A certificate issued by the Commercial Register in Egypt affirming that the proposed name of the company or logo has not already been registered in Egypt.

The company must apply for a "Trademark Examination Form" to check whether a similar trademark for the product already exists in the market.

If a foreign company wishes to protect its logo, the company has to supply the General Administration for Trademark with an example of its logo as registered with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The foreign company should employ an agent in Cairo to follow the trademark registration process.

It takes approximately from 3 to 9 months to register a logo or a brand name. Once approved, it is announced in the "Trademark Newspaper."

Section IX: Import Procedures

It often takes at least two weeks for the product to complete all customs formalities. The rejection of a product for any reason quickly throws the consignment "off track," or as one importer puts it, "into a loop" Getting the product out of the loop and back on track is both times consuming (occasionally in excess of 3 months or more) and expensive. There are no guarantees or assurances in appealing a rejection. In the end, authorities may still refuse to clear the product.

Any product not in compliance with Egyptian import requirements will likely be rejected. It is the appeal process, which accounts for the added time and expense involved in clearing the product through customs.

The initial import procedure entails the assignment of a shipping agent (a GOE entity and separate from the vessel shipping agent); arrival of the consignment at port and a comparison of the invoice and bill of lading with the ship's manifest; issuance of a title transfer document to the importer; the unloading of the consignment; the purchase and completion of the "Importation Form" and registration of the consignment with customs in the so-called "No. 46 Book;" and initial tariff classification of the product.

Egyptian companies often rely on customs brokers, or their own staff to check on shipments and to clear products through customs.

The following documents must be presented to the customs office in order for a shipment to be released:

- Bill of Lading or Letter of Guarantee (L/G)
- Commercial Invoice
- Packing Lists
- Weight List
- Insurance Policy
- Certificate of Origin countersigned by the Chamber of Commerce and notarized by the Egyptian Embassy or Consulate in the country of origin
- Import/Export Permit of the importer
- If the importer is an agent of a U.S. (or other foreign) manufacturer, the latter has to present an Agency Authorization Certificate for the products being imported.
- Form 11 from a local bank advising that payment has been transferred to the supplier. This form guarantees payment to the supplier.
- Food Certificates.

The following documents are optional:

- A letter from the bank indicating that all administration fees have been paid. If this letter is not submitted, all administrative expenses must be paid at the port.
- Radiation Certificate.

Appendix I: Government Entities Most Concerned with Food Import Clearances**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK, FISHERY, ANIMAL WEALTH AND LAND RECLAMATION (MALR)**

Address: 71 Wezaret El Zeraa Street

Dokki, Cairo, Egypt

Tel: (202) 337-3388 / 2677

Fax: (202) 749-8128

Contact: **Eng. Ahmed El Leithy**

Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation Affairs

Dr. Ahmed Tawfik

Chairman, General Organization for Veterinary Services

Tel: (202) 748-1750

Fax: (202) 335-0692

Dr. Mostafa Abdel Moneim

Head of Central Administration for Veterinary Quarantine

Tel & fax: (202) 748-1763

Dr. Safwat El-Hadad

Undersecretary for Agricultural Quarantine

Tel: (202) 337-2881 / 336-1727

Fax: (202) 336-3582

CENTRAL LAB FOR PESTICIDES (MALR)

Address: 7 Nadi El Seid St.,

Dokki, Cairo, Egypt

Tel: (202) 748-6163

Fax: (202) 761-1216

Contact: **Dr. Soheir Ahmed Gad**

Director

CENTRAL LAB FOR FOOD AND FEED (CLFF/MALR)

Address: 9 El Gamaa Street

Giza, Egypt

Tel: (202) 573-1989

Fax: (202) 573-2280

Contact: **Dr. Mohamed Emara**

Director

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER

Address: 9 Gamaa Street, Orman

Giza, Egypt

Tel: (2-02) 572-2069 / 572-3906

Fax: (2-02) 572-2609

Contact: **Dr. Abdel-Azim Tantawy**
President

Tel: (2-02) 572-0944

MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MOH)

Address: 3 Maglis El Shaab Street
Cairo, Egypt

Tel: (2-02) 795-7689 / 794-3462

Fax: (2-02) 795-3966

Contact: **Dr. Mohamed Awad Tag El Dine**
Minister

Dr. Zeinab Abdel Halim
Manager of Food Control Division
Food & Quality Control
Tel & Fax: (2-02) 794-8152

CENTRAL LABORATORY (MOH)

Address: 3 Magles El Shaab Street
Cairo, Egypt

Tel: (2-02) 794-7271

Fax: (2-02) 796-2248

Contact: **Dr. Magda Ali Rakha**
First Undersecretary of State Central Health Laboratory

FOOD INSTITUTE (MOH)

Address: 16 Kasr El Eini Street
Cairo, Egypt

Tel: (2-02) 364-6413 / 3522

Fax: (2-02) 364-7476

Contact: **Dr. Hoda Abdel Fattah Hassan**
Chairman

Dr. Ismail Rafaat
Dietary and Specialty Food

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE & INDUSTRY

Address: 8 Adly Street
5th floor, Cairo, Egypt

Tel: (2-02) 391-9661

Fax: (2-02) 390-3029

Contact: **Mr. Rachid Mohamed Rachid**
Minister of Foreign Trade & Industry

EGYPTIAN ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION AND QUALITY CONTROL

Address: 16 Tadreeb el Motdrabeen Street
Amiria
Cairo, Egypt

Tel: (2-02) 603-1348
Fax: (2-02) 603-1351

Contact: **Dr. Mahmoud Eissa**
Chairman

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND DOMESTIC TRADE (MOS)

Address: 99 Kasr El Eini Street
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: (2-02) 794-6165 / 794-6777
Fax: (2-02) 795-6835

Contact: **Dr. Hassan Khedr**
Minister

GENERAL ORGANIZATION FOR EXPORT AND IMPORT CONTROL (GOEIC)

Address: 1 Ramsis Street
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: (2-02) 575-6130
Fax: (2-02) 575-8195

Contact: **General Mohamed Abdel Hamid El Banna**
Chairman

Eng. Raghieb Hozaien

Undersecretary for Import Control for Food Imports

Tel: (2-02) 574-1654
Fax: (2-02) 575-8195

Dr. Youssef Labib

Undersecretary for Lab. Affairs

Appendix II: Other Contacts

For further help, please contact the Office of Agricultural Affairs, American Embassy, Cairo, Egypt, Tel: 011 (20-2) 795-2388 / 2389; Fax: 011 (20-2) 796-3989. E-mail: Agcairo@fas.usda.gov

Appendix III: Import Tariffs

Product	Prior to 9/2004	After 9/2004
Poultry	80%	32%
Fats and tallow	40%	22%
Shrimp and lobster	30%	5%
Milk	30%	5%
Cream	40%	32%
Cheese	30%	22%
Legumes	20%	5%
Chick peas and garbanzo	20%	5%
Nuts (almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, walnuts)	30%	12%
Dried apricots	40%	22%
Dried plums	40%	22%
Tea	30%	5%
Vanilla, Anise, nutmeg	20%	5%
Raw sugar	5%	2%
Prepared soy oil	20%	12%
Prepared palm oil	20%	12%
Salmon	10%	5%
Tuna	10%	5%
Chocolate	40%	32%
Cocoa	20%	5%
Hard and softwood	8%	5%
Block boards (covered)	43%	12%
Block boards (uncovered)	30%	12%
Plywood	33%	12%
Veneer	15%	5%
Fertilizers	8- 33%	2%
Agricultural tractors	13- 33%	5%
Tires of agricultural tractors	33%	5%
Spare parts for agricultural tractors	13- 30%	2%

Appendix IV: Shelf-Life and Packaging Standards for Food Products
Frozen Fish stored at a temperature not exceeding -18° C

Product	Expiration Period	Type of Package
Cold fumigated fish	5 months	Suitable package
Hot fumigated fish	3.5 months	Suitable package
Semi-hot fumigated	3.5 months	Suitable package
Shrimp & Crustacean	8 months	Plastic or carton
Frozen fish (Fish kept at Suitable Temperature inside Stores Fulfilling Good Aeration Conditions)	6 months	Polyethylene bags inside strong carton boxes. Boxes are stacked with crossed belts. For large-size fish, suitable package
Frozen Cuttlefish (Sepia) (Fish kept at Suitable Temperature inside Stores Fulfilling Good Aeration Conditions)	10 months for gutted frozen Sepia 8 months for non-gutted frozen Sepia	Suitable package
Sardine	36 months	Sterilized metal pack
Tuna	36 months	Sterilized metal pack
Anchovy canned in oil	18 months 18 months 12 months 12 months	Tightly closed metal Tightly closed glass Metal packs Anchovy paste in tubes
Salmon fish	36 months	Sterilized metal pack
Mackerel Fish	36 months	Sterilized metal pack
Salted Fish	6 months	Suitable packages
Fish Roes (egg mass)	3 months	Suitable packages
Cooked Cheese and its pastes having different names	12 months	Metal packs, firmly closed
Ghee	24 months 12 months	Firmly closed metal packs Other packs
Ripened, soft Cheese	12 months 6 months	Metal packages Suitable packages
Feta Cheese	12 months 6 months	Metal packages Suitable packages

Product	Expiration Period	Type of Package
Butter (kept at a temperature ranging from 0 to 5 degrees)	2 months	Suitable packages
Biscuit: - Plain - Stuffed	Plain: 1 Year Stuffed: 9 months	Suitable packages
Popcorn	3 months	Suitable packages
Jelly Powder	18 months	Suitable packages
Custard Powder	12 months	Suitable packages
Cream Caramel Powder	12 months	Suitable packages
Brown Sugar	18 months	Suitable packages
Canned fruits - Grapefruit - Strawberry	24 months	Cans polished with anti acidity varnish
Canned fruit juice	24 months	Suitable cans
Apricot, Orange, Grapefruit, Mandarin, and Lemon juice	18 months	Suitable package
Dried Fruit juices	24 months	Suitable cans
Dried fruits (raisin, plums, apricot)	12 months	Paper or plastic packages
Pickled vegetables	18 months 12 months 6 months 24 months	Heat treated glass Aluminum foils Plastic packages Varnished metal pack
All tomato products	18 months	Varnished metal package Suitable packages
Jam, marmalade, jelly	24 months	Suitable packages
Frozen liver	7 months as of the date of freezing	Polyethylene bags inside impermeable carton boxes

Product	Expiration Period	Type of Package
Frozen Meat	As of the date of slaughter: - 9 months for cow, camel, and buffalo meat; - 6 months for sheep and goat meat; - 6 months for brisket and flank meat	Suitable intact package, polyethylene bags, impermeable carton box